

10 JANUARY 2025

# NEWSLETTER

Dear families,

Welcome back to Term 3! This week, we've hit the ground running with a fantastic start to the new term. Read on for more details.

## Key Dates:

- 16 January 2025 - Year 11 Parents Evening
- 30 January 2025 - Year 9 Parents Evening
- 05 February 2025 - Parent Forum Year 7, 8 and 9
- 13 February 2025 – Year 10 Parents Evening
- 14 February 2025 – Term 3 Ends

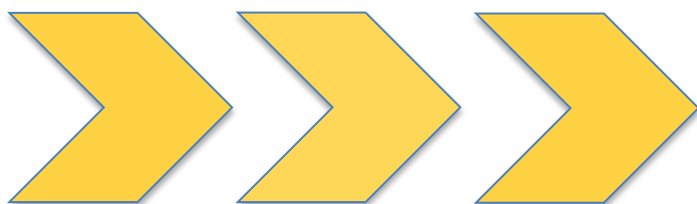
## Update

### **\*\* EXTRA CURRICULAR CLUBS TERM 3 \*\***

Updated timetable for our Extra-Curricular clubs can be found on the website.

Please click the link below for more information.

[EXTRA CURRICULAR CLUBS TERM 3](#)



## NEXT WEEK IS WEEK A TIMETABLE



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## A Warm Welcome Back and Exciting News for the New Term!

We hope you all had a wonderful Christmas break and enjoyed some well-deserved rest and quality time with family and friends. As we start the new term, we are excited to welcome students back and look forward to building on the progress made so far this academic year. We will continue to focus on high expectations, active learning, and positive attitudes, ensuring that every student is supported to achieve their personal best.

I am pleased to announce that offline homework is now being sent home for a number of subjects to further support students in reinforcing their learning and preparing for upcoming assessments. To help students keep their work organised and protected, we have ordered new folders, which will be distributed as soon as they arrive. Online homework will continue to be set as usual and is accessible through Google Classroom. We encourage all students to check their Google Classroom regularly to ensure they are keeping up with their assignments. Thank you for your continued support.

Thank you once again for your ongoing support.

Mr Holmes,  
Headteacher



## SIXTH FORM UPDATE

### \*\*Sixth Form Applications Now Open! \*\*



Interviews for Sixth Form places at The Whitstable School will be taking place throughout January and February. All communication regarding applications and interviews will be made via Kent Choices.

If you haven't already, please visit our website for more information.

- View [Prospectus](#)
- View [Sixth Forms Pathways](#)
- View [Why Choose Our Sixth Form](#)
- Apply via [Kent Choices](#)

Places are still available for our **Football** and **Golf Academies**.

**We look forward to receiving your application.**



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## REMINDERS

### **\*\*Important Notice: Gas Network Upgrade- Bellevue Road/Millstrood Road, Whitstable\*\***

Please be aware that gas network upgrade works have begun. To minimize disruption, please plan your child's drop-off and pick-up times in advance, as these works may impact access to the school during this period. Thank you for your understanding.



### **\*\*Important Information for Bus 638 Users\*\***

Please note that there will be changes to the **Stagecoach 638** bus service from January 6th. For full details of these changes, please see the following document: [[Stagecoach 638 service](#)] This information is important for students and families who rely on this bus route.

### **\*\*Important Vaccination Reminder for Year 10 & 11 Parents! \*\***

Does your Year 10 or 11 child need a Meningococcal ACWY (MenACWY) or Tetanus, Diphtheria, Polio (Td/IPV) vaccination?

We're offering catch-up vaccinations at **The Whitstable School on February 3rd & 4th, 2025.**

Parents will receive more information directly from the school.

For more information, click on the links:

- [Teenage 3 in 1 booster Td/ IPV](#)
- [Meningitis and Septicaemia](#)

### **\*\*Engines Off \*\***

To help reduce air pollution, noise levels, and respect our neighbour's, please remember to turn off your engine while waiting to drop off or pick up your child. Thank you for your cooperation.



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## THIS WEEK SO FAR...

### \*\* First Team Debut for 16-year-old Football Academy Student Alex\*\*

Congratulations to our year 12 Football Academy player, Alex, who made his Isthmian South League debut for Sheppey United first team!

A superb achievement from Alex so early on in his football journey, an outstanding footballer who has so much more development & progression ahead of him. Alex joined our programme in September 2024 and has gone from strength to strength.

We look forward to seeing Alex's progression over the next 2 years!

### Want to join our successful Football Academy!

➔ Contact Ms. Simons, Head of Sixth Form.

☎ 01227931300

✉ [tws\\_sixthform@swale.at](mailto:tws_sixthform@swale.at)



### \*\*Our Three Kings Parade Was a Royal Success! \*\*

Did you know that in Spain, children receive gifts not only from Santa Claus but also from the Three Wise Men in January?

This week, our Year 7 students experienced this tradition first hand with our very own Three Kings Parade!

In December, our Year 7s campaigned to become one of the Wise Men. They delivered persuasive speeches in Spanish to their classmates, who then voted for their preferred candidate.

A big thank you to our esteemed Kings and their loyal camels: Ivy, Jonah, Harry, Charlie, and Ted!

You were truly regal!

¡Prospero Año Nuevo! (Happy New Year!)



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**\*\*A Thrilling Day at Williams Racing! \*\***

On Wednesday, our D&T department embarked on an exciting field trip to the Williams Racing F1 Headquarters. Students participated in a fascinating STEM workshop, experienced the thrill of Esports simulators, and enjoyed a guided tour of the facility.

This was an incredible opportunity for our students, and everyone thoroughly enjoyed the day.



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**\*\*TRACK Excellence Raffle Winners Announced! \*\***

Each Wednesday, the school will run a 'TRACK Excellence' raffle with two prizes for students. To enter, students just have to have seven or more positive signatures over the two weeks. Students with negative signatures are still able to participate.

This week winners are **Sidney and Juno (Year 7)**.



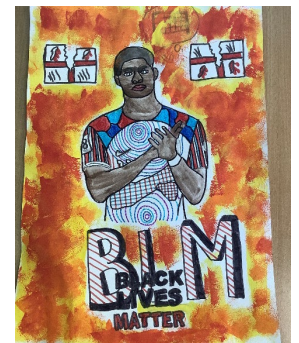
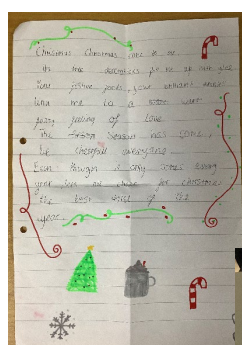
Students with their prizes in the TRACK Excellence raffle.

**\*\*Book of Commendation Highlights\*\***

We're celebrating the incredible work of these talented students:

- **Monty (Year 9) and Betsy (Year 7):** For their beautifully crafted Christmas poems.
- **Marley and Summer (Year 8):** For their powerful and thought-provoking Black Lives Matter posters.
- **Tommy, Cody, and Kai (Year 7):** For their engaging essays and creative drawings about their favourite subjects in Spanish.

Well done to all! We're incredibly proud of your hard work and dedication.



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## UPCOMING EVENTS

**\*\*Celebrate Our Amazing Staff! Nominate a Teacher of the Year! \*\***

**Do you know a superstar teacher or staff member at The Whitstable School?**

We believe our staff are all incredible, and we're asking for your help to nominate them for the Kent Teacher of the Year Award!

### Why nominate?

- Recognize the positive impact teachers have on students' lives.
- Motivate educators and foster school pride.
- Celebrate everyone who makes a difference in our children's education.

### Who can be nominated?

- Teachers
- Support staff
- Early career educators
- Non-teaching staff
- Volunteers



### How to nominate:

Simply tell us what makes your nominee stand out! Use this link to submit your nomination:

[Kent Teacher of the Year Nomination Form](#)

**Nominations close February 28th, 2025!**

Let's show our amazing staff how much we appreciate them!

**\*\*Save the Date! \*\*** 📅

Our Careers Fair is coming up on  
**13th of March 2025.**  
Keep an eye out for more details!



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## \*\* Important Work Experience Dates for Year 10 \*\*

- **Week of: June 30th - July 4th, 2025 (5 days)**

### Work experience is a valuable opportunity for you to:

- Gain exposure to the professional world and explore different career paths.
- Develop essential skills desired by employers, such as communication, teamwork, and problem-solving.
- Boost your confidence and build your personal and social skills.

### Finding Your Placement:

You are responsible for finding your own work experience placement. This allows you to explore your interests and connect with potential career fields. We will be providing support through Unifrog, a platform that helps you track and manage your placement search.

### Have Questions?

If you have any further questions about work experience, please don't hesitate to contact:

- Email: [tws-workexperience@swale.at](mailto:tws-workexperience@swale.at)

## \*\*Calling Young Artists! \*\*

### ✦ The Young Artists' Summer Show is back! ✦

This free exhibition showcases the incredible talent of young artists aged 4-18 across the UK. Want to participate?

- **Students:** Speak to Miss Butler to learn how to submit your artwork through the school.
- **Teachers & Parents/Guardians:** You can also submit artwork on behalf of students.

A panel of esteemed artists and arts professionals will judge the submissions. Selected artworks will be displayed both online and at the prestigious Royal Academy of Arts!

### Don't miss this exciting opportunity!

**Submission Deadline:** March 5th, 2025.



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## NOTICE BOARD

### \*\*Cuccina Restaurant: Plant-Based Delights All January! \*\*

Throughout the month of January, Cuccina will be showcasing delicious plant-based specials. Students can enjoy variety of flavourful and creative dishes crafted with fresh, seasonal ingredients.



### \*\* Young Carers at The Whitstable School \*\*



Did you know that The Whitstable School now has a Young Carers Support Group running every Wednesday lunchtime in GZ27?

This group will be run by Mrs James and is open to all Young Carers (registered or non-registered) caring for a family member with; a long term illness, disability, poor mental health or substance misuse.

Whether it is to just sit and listen, talk and share or just be in the company of other young people with caring responsibilities, we are here!

What is a Young Carer?

Young Carers provide unpaid care for a family member or friend with an illness, disability, mental health issue, or addiction. They support the cared-for and other family members with practical tasks, physical care, and emotional support, whilst at the same time trying to live their own life.

Do you think that your child is a Young Carer? Please contact Mrs James for more info or give Kent Young Carers a call on 0300 111 1110, email [youngcarers@imago.community](mailto:youngcarers@imago.community) or take a look at the Kent Young Carers website [www.imago.community](http://www.imago.community)



**What Parents & Educators Need to Know about JUSTALK KIDS**

JustTalk Kids is a child's version of the JustTalk app - a highly popular social networking platform - designed for users up to 13 years of age, allowing them to video call, message and participate in group chats. While adults can link their own JustTalk account to their child's and make use of parental controls, it's important to understand the risks associated with the app.

**WHAT ARE THE RISKS?**

- SUBSCRIPTION FOR PREMIUM ACCESS:** While JustTalk Kids is free, there's the option to subscribe to a premium account or a premium family account. At a cost, this feature allows children to have access to more features such as games they can play with others in a safe, monitored online space, keeping them as a premium subscriber, and exclusive avatars and themes.
- POTENTIAL DATA LEAKS:** JustTalk and JustTalk Kids claim to be secure and encrypted, going so far as to state that even the developers themselves won't access your data. However, a security lapse in 2022 highlighted that messages were not in fact encrypted, leading to concerns about the security of the app and the transparency of the development team.
- RESISTANCE TO CONTROLS:** JustTalk Kids endeavours to allow children the sense of having a chat-based app while ensuring parental control. However, children can sidestep these controls by using a burner phone or from their own adult JustTalk account. This means that while JustTalk Kids offers controls, children are challenging their parents by refusing to use JustTalk Kids, and trying to use the app without any restrictions in place.
- CYBERBULLYING:** Direct chats can provide a sense of anonymity, leading some users to post things they wouldn't post in a public space. In addition, there is a risk that sharing personal information in the form of photos, videos, or text, and potentially sharing what should be a fun experience into something deeply negative.
- KNOWING THE PARENT PASSCODE:** After downloading JustTalk Kids, parents can set a passcode which users must enter to log in. The parental controls help to manage which content is shared and who children can chat with. However, if a child knows the parent passcode, they can bypass the parental controls. However, parental controls don't have to be used. Parents can choose to use the app without any restrictions in place and then add them as a parent.
- TOO MUCH SCREEN TIME:** A report by the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) in December 2022 showed a 32% decrease in children's screen time between 2020 and 2022, as well as finding that 28% of children used their smartphones for more than 3 hours a day. Screen addiction, introducing children to social networking sites when they're too young can lead to bad sleep habits, anxiety, and a reliance on technology from an early age.

**Advice for Parents & Educators**

- JUSTIFY THE CONTROLS:** If parents allow their child to use JustTalk Kids, they should explain that they're putting parental controls in place to ensure the app is safe. Make sure the child knows not to put their full name on the account and doesn't use a photo of themselves on their profile picture. This type of open discussion will help to ensure that a child is aware of the app's potential risks and knows how to reduce them.
- TALK ABOUT ONLINE FRIENDSHIPS:** Young children could be excited to use this app. However, highlight that they must be a good, respectful and responsible member. While it can be easy to get caught up in a group chat, it's important to talk to others politely and not get into unpleasant debates. Discuss the importance of being kind to contacts in people they know in real life and use parental controls to enforce this.
- DOES AND DON'TS OF SHARING:** Some children might not understand the potential dangers of oversharing online. Set clear guidelines around what is and isn't safe to share on the internet, and discuss the concept of a digital footprint. Children need to understand that the things they say and share online can never be completely erased. Even if they delete it themselves, it can be saved and distributed by others.
- ENCOURAGE OPEN COMMUNICATION:** Apps like JustTalk can sometimes lend themselves to bullying behaviour. Parents should monitor what their child is sending and receiving. Check in with them regularly and encourage them to share their feelings (both positive and negative). At home, remind them that they can block a contact if someone is treating them disrespectfully.

**Meet Our Expert**

Dr Claire Sutherland is an online safety consultant, educator and researcher who has developed and implemented online safety and cyber safety policies for schools. She has written various educational reports and carried out research for the Australian government comparing internet use and sending behaviour of young people in the UK, USA and Australia.

**Wake Up Wednesday** | **The National College**

See full reference list on guide page at <https://thenationalcollege.com/guides/justtalk-kids>

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**Swale ACADEMIES TRUST**

Ever thought about volunteering as a school governor?

Want to know more? Scan the QR code to check out our website now!

We believe that effective governance is best delivered when school leaders are held to account and challenged on pupil outcomes as well as the quality of education provided.

You do not need to be from an education background - we value what people from outside the sector can offer!

Now considering becoming a school governor? Get in touch!

We'd love to hear from you.

hello@swale.at  
01795 905989

For more updates and events, please visit our website and follow us on X and Facebook.

<https://www.thewhitstableschool.org.uk/>  
<https://www.facebook.com/TheWhitstableSchool>  
<https://x.com/TheWhitSchool>

Best Wishes  
The Whitstable School Team



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